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4 MAY 1977

MEMORANDUM FOR: Deputy Director for Intelligence  
Deputy Director for Operations  
Deputy Director for Science and Technology  
Administrative Officer, DCI

77-1250

FROM : John F. Blake  
Deputy Director for Administration

SUBJECT : Document Classification

1. On 25 April the Agency received a memorandum from the Executive Director of the Interagency Classification Review Committee (ICRC) advising us that in the course of a routine ICRC review of another Government agency, three CIA documents had been located which appeared to be improperly classified. In the course of our follow-up on this matter, it was determined that the officer whose employee number was cited on the documents as having authorized their classification did not, in fact, do so. As a result of a recent reorganization, the employee had been reassigned but his former office had continued to use his employee number as authorization for document classification.

2. It is obvious that with the increased emphasis being placed by the Executive branch on proper classification and with the numerous cases of litigation arising out of the Freedom of Information Act, Privacy Act and other matters, we must ensure that practices such as cited above are eliminated. It is important that employees whose numbers are cited as authorizing classification of documents involve themselves personally in the process by either actually reviewing documents being classified or through strict supervision and guidance of others who might be authorized to use their number. It should be emphasized that in recent months senior Agency officials have been called to testify in court regarding classification matters, and it can be anticipated that such occasions will arise in the future. The outcome of such legal proceedings could be adversely affected if it could be demonstrated that classified material in question was not in fact properly classified.

3. I would appreciate your bringing to the attention of members of your component the importance of strict adherence to established classification procedures.

/s/John F. Blake

John F. Blake

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ATTACHMENT 3

12 July 1977

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Central Intelligence

VIA : Deputy Director for Intelligence

FROM : Maurice C. Ernst  
Director of Economic Research

SUBJECT : CIA Participation in USDA World Food  
and Agricultural Outlook and Situation  
Board

1. Action Requested: Approval to participate in USDA World Food and Agricultural Outlook and Situation Board under stated conditions.

2. Background: On 5 July 1977, [redacted] of this Office discussed the resources and support capabilities of CIA with USDA officials Dale E. Hathaway, Assistant Secretary for International Affairs and Commodity Programs, and Howard W. Hjort, Director of Economic Policy Analysis and Budget. The meeting revealed a distinct desire on the part of the USDA officials to have coordinated (USDA-CIA) estimates of the Soviet grain crop as well as world supply and demand situations for selected commodities.

3. It was agreed that it would be highly desirable to work toward such an agreement. However, there is the difficulty that USDA's estimates are released to the public while CIA's are based on classified information and intended only for U.S. policymakers. Mr. Hjort proposed a range be used for the Soviet grain estimate, which could capture any differences between USDA and CIA estimates. This suggestion should be further explored.

4. Mr. Hjort also asked whether CIA would be interested in participating in a new group established in the USDA, The World Food and Agricultural Outlook Situation Board, which will coordinate and approve all USDA economic and situation reports (see Attachment).

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This way CIA's information and analysis could be more directly used in the final estimates published by USDA on international commodity and agricultural situations.

5. While CIA has had good communications and relations with USDA, participation in the new Board would provide opportunities for even better exchange of information and analysis. In particular we would try to bring to bear on USDA's agricultural estimates the full range of CIA's collection and analytical capability. At the same time I believe strongly that we must maintain our independence. We can avoid taking issue over minor differences but cannot escape the responsibility for bringing important differences to the attention of the President and his chief aides in other Departments.

6. I recommend, therefore, that OER be permitted to indicate to USDA an interest in participating on their new Board under the following conditions:

-- We will attend only those Board meetings where CIA has a clear contribution to make;

-- CIA will make every effort to achieve a consensus of views, but reserves the right to publish on a classified basis estimates which differ substantially from those of the majority of the Board; and

-- Appropriate arrangements will be made by USDA to protect CIA's sensitive sources and methods.

  
MAURICE C. ERNST

Attachment:  
As stated

APPROVED: \_\_\_\_\_  
Director of Central Intelligence

DISAPPROVED: \_\_\_\_\_  
Director of Central Intelligence

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

WFS  
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

WORLD FOOD AND AGRICULTURAL OUTLOOK AND SITUATION BOARD ESTABLISHED

WASHINGTON, June 15--Acting Secretary of Agriculture John C. White announced today that the U.S. Department of Agriculture has established a new board to coordinate and improve all USDA economic and situation reports.

The World Food and Agricultural Outlook and Situation Board assumes all of the functions previously carried out by the Outlook and Situation Board, in addition, to being given several new responsibilities including the review and coordination of Foreign Agricultural Service reports on world food and agricultural situation and outlook.

According to Mr. White, this board has been formed to provide one central point where agencies or the public can receive information, to better coordinate the analytical input into domestic and world situation and outlook materials, and to eliminate the duplicative efforts of various agencies within the Department of Agriculture.

"We have within USDA a comprehensive commodity data and information system," Mr. White stated. "However, the collection of information and its release in reports are divided among several agencies providing the potential for inconsistency and questions about its overall reliability.

We think this board will enable us to be factual, consistent, and objective in all USDA reports," Mr. White said.

"The board will help meet USDA responsibilities to farmers and consumers by more completely recognizing and analyzing the increasing interdependence between world and U.S. agriculture and the sensitivity of commodity markets to changes in world supply-demand estimates," Mr. White emphasized.

The chairman of the World Food and Agricultural Outlook and Situation Board will report to Howard W. Hjort, director of economics, policy analysis and budget.

Mr. Hjort has named J. Dawson Ahalt, staff economist in the Office of the Secretary as acting chairman of the new board.

Mr. White explained that the board and staff of career professionals will be drawn together from several department agencies. They will have independent authority for the coordination, review, and clearance of all situation and outlook materials.

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